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No Other Town in the World the Size of Grants Pass Has a Paper With Full Leased Wire Telegraph Service.

FORT VAUX IS LOST BY GERMANS

Last Important Position on Northwest Front at Verdun Has Been Evacuated by the Kaiser's Troops

Berlin, via Wireless to Sayville, Nov. 2.—Fort Vaux, on the north-east front of Verdun, has been evacuated by German troops, it was officially announced today.

"The artillery engagement on the east bank of the Meuse repeatedly increased to great intensity," said the war office. "The French directed especially heavy destructive fire against Fort Vaux, which had already been evacuated during the night by our troops, following a given order, and without being disturbed by the enemy. Important parts of the fort were blasted by us before withdrawal."

(Fort Vaux was the last of the Verdun fortresses remaining in the hands of the Germans, Fort Douaumont having been recaptured by the French in their recent offensive. United Press dispatches from the Verdun front Saturday night declared that Fort Vaux was surrounded on three sides by the French, whose artillery was playing heavily on the fort, cutting off the German supplies.)

"North of the Somme artillery activity was renewed in local actions," continued the statement. "An English advance north of Courcellette was easily repulsed."

"French attacks in the sector of Les Boeufs and Rancourt brought small advantage for the enemy. Northeast of Morval and on the northwest edge of Pierre Vaast wood the enemy attacks were generally repulsed with sanguinary losses. Our troops, in spite of the tenacious French resistance, made an advance in the north part of Sally."

"In the eastern war theater Prince Leopold's front, in the army group of General von Linsingen and east of Friesen, troops under Major General von Dittbergh's command stormed Russian advanced positions near and south of Vitoniez, on the left bank of the Stochod. Besides suffering heavy losses, the Russians left 22 officers and 1,508 men in our hands. We captured 10 machine guns and three mine throwers. Our losses were small."

"Farther south, near Alexandrovka, we brought back sixty prisoners from a successful reconnoitering raid. On the Archduke Carl's front, in the eastern Carpathians, there were successful enterprises against Russian advance positions north of Dorna Vatra."

MERCHANT SHIPS FOR USE IN WAR

Washington, Nov. 2.—The government is now practically ready to take over all merchant vessels desired for auxiliaries in case of war. Blank contracts are being drawn up by the navy department. It was learned today. When completed the contracts will lack only the price to be paid for the vessel and the signature of the owner. The price will depend on trade conditions.

Naval officers who will command the ships, in case of war, already have been selected. Plans of the navy department show the type of gun which could be mounted on each vessel.

AMERICAN WHO FIGHTS IN EUROPE IS EXPATRIATED

Washington, Nov. 2.—Any American who fights for England in the present war expatriates himself. The state department made this clear in connection with its action in refusing a passport to Theodore Marburg, Jr., of Baltimore, who is returning to England to rejoin the Royal Aviation corps. Marburg is the son of the former United States minister to Belgium.

Expatriation results from the fact that all British soldiers must take the oath of allegiance to the British crown, which in the case of Americans wipes out their allegiance to this country.

As for Americans fighting with the French army, the department made known that the burden will rest upon them to prove the oath they have taken has not expatriated them.

Even after peace is declared, it was said by the department, men who have served in the armies abroad will not be granted passports to travel abroad as American citizens. Those who return to this country in destitute circumstances will be treated as ordinary alien immigrants.

It was learned today also that the state department has suggested to the French government that it discontinue referring to the American aviators with the French army as members of the "American corps," owing to the false light in which such references place the United States as a neutral nation.

WANT FORD CASH FOR DIVIDENDS

Detroit, Nov. 2.—A temporary restraining order, limiting the extent of operations of the Ford Motor company and preventing the expenditure of large sums for expansion, was issued late today by Circuit Judge Mandell on petition of Dodge Brothers, Detroit automobile manufacturers, who hold 10 per cent of the stock of the Ford company. The petitioners seek to force the Ford company to declare special dividends, which, they assert, the Ford company is earning, instead of putting the money back into the business in extensions.

Fort Sheridan, Ill.—A weird tale of being jabbed with a morphine needle and being set adrift on the lake by a woman vampire, failed to convince Colonel Forman of the First Illinois cavalry, and Private Charles E. McArthur was placed in the guardhouse. Absent four days.

COURTHOUSE CONTRACT GOES TO PORTLAND FIRM

County Court Accepts Bid of J. M. Dougan & Co. for Construction of New Capitol Building, They Being the Lowest of Eight Bidders, the Cost of Building Without Heating and Plumbing Equipment to Be \$76,443

Josephine county's new court house is to be built by J. M. Dougan Company, of Portland, the bid of that firm having been accepted by the county court at its session this afternoon, the bid of the successful contestant being for \$76,443, or just \$7 under that of A. J. Green, of Grants Pass, the next lowest bidder upon the contract.

Eight firms offered bids for the work. The bid accepted includes the building complete, with terra cotta used in the place of brick for the exterior finish, but does not include the installation of heating and plumbing, which will be let in a separate contract.

The bidders and the figures submitted were as follows:

Tranchel-Parelius & Wayman—		
Brick		\$89,365.00
Geo. Jackson—		
Brick	\$76,564.00	
Terra Cotta	4,500.00	\$1,064.00
If plastering is omitted deduct	\$3,500.00	
J. M. Dougan Company—		
Brick	72,843.00	
Terra Cotta	3,600.00	76,443.00
If plastering is omitted deduct	\$3,330.00	
Bingham & Sheeley Company—		
Brick	73,410.00	
Terra Cotta	4,000.00	77,410.00
Plastering included.		
John Almeter—		
Brick	73,400.00	
No plastering.		
Parker & Banfield—		
Brick	74,066.00	
Terra Cotta	4,184.00	78,250.00
If plastering is omitted deduct	\$3,276.00	
J. H. Tillman—		
Brick	71,460.00	
Terra Cotta	3,265.00	74,725.00
If awarded general contract, plaster	\$3,700.00	
If awarded general contract, heating	\$7,039.00	
A. J. Green—		
Brick	69,000.00	
Terra Cotta	4,600.00	
Plaster	3,850.00	76,450.00

The firm of J. M. Dougan Company, to whom was awarded the contract, is known throughout the northwest, having built many of the larger public buildings. It is now engaged in the construction of the new federal building at Portland, and erected the Medford post office building. The Benson hotel of Portland is also one of its structures. The vote of the county court in the award was unanimous, and was with the approval of the committee from the taxpayers' league, invited in for conference.

P. W. Hershberger, of Grants Pass, was given the contract for the removal of the old court house from the grounds, his bid being \$815. Others bidders for this were Albert Anderson, at \$1,060, and J. A. Varner, at \$1,085.

For installation of the heating and plumbing there are four bidders, the lowest in combined bid being that of Thos. Barr, of Salem, who agrees to do the plumbing and heating installation for \$6,978. The next lowest bid was that of W. R. Rannie, at \$7,057.

On the plumbing alone the figures were \$3,300, by Barr; \$3,620, by Finnigan Brothers, and \$4,000, by Rannie.

For heating, Rannie bid \$3,057; Barr, \$3,678; Kendall Heating Company, of Portland, \$4,178; Finnigan Brothers, Portland, \$3,964. Some of the bidders also included figures upon an oil heater in addition, the figures ranging from \$1,450 to \$1,820.

Final consideration of the bids for the heating and plumbing has been postponed till morning.

HALT ADVANCE OF MACKENSEN IN DOBRUDJA

Petrograd, Nov. 2.—Field Marshal von Mackensen has halted his advance in Dobrudja, apparently because of a shortage of men to protect his long line along the river Danube. Dispatches from Bucharest say Mackensen has been forced to send several regiments to the Transylvanian front to aid Field Marshal von Falkenhayn. The withdrawal of these troops is said to have checked his offensive operations, temporarily at least.

Practically everywhere along the Transylvania frontier, excepting south of Red Tower pass, the Roumanians are holding their own, and the Austro-Germans have been halted in their advance on Campolung, but are continuing their heavy attacks in the Alt valley, where the loss of two villages by the Roumanians was officially conceded yesterday.

ALLIED WARSHIPS SHELL CONSTANZA

Vienna, via Sayville, Nov. 2.—Enemy warships have shelled the Roumanian Black sea port of Constanza, recently captured by the Germans and Bulgars, without success, it was officially announced today.

"Roumanian attacks against the Austro-German troops that had advanced beyond Altschanz and Predeal pass, Roumania, failed under losses," the war office stated. "We captured eight officers and 200 men. South of Red Tower pass engagements which are favorable to us continue."

"On the Macedonian front Serbian advances in the Cerna bend and north of Nidze Planina were repulsed."

"On the Struma front there have been active foreground engagements."

DISCUSS ARMING OF MERCHANTMEN

Washington, Nov. 2.—Reopening of the entire armed merchantman controversy between this government and Germany is certain, if it is proved the British steamer Marina was armed at the time she was sunk by a German submarine, statements of Secretary Lansing indicated today.

Whether merchantmen have a right to arm for defense still is an open question between this government and Germany, Lansing admitted. This question will be the principal one if negotiations develop with Germany over the deaths of six Americans on board the Marina, it was stated.

While this government has maintained the right of merchantmen to arm for defense, Germany has never admitted it. The question first arose when the Lusitania was sunk. This government has insisted that merchantmen may arm with any guns not over six inches in calibre. When discussion of this point arose during the Lusitania negotiations, the state department showed the Lusitania was unarmed. Without a recession by this government from its position or an admission by Germany that merchantmen might arm, the question was permitted to lapse.

Secretary Lansing said the right of merchantmen to arm still is a mooted question; that there has been no decision over it. Germany is expected to maintain that armed merchantmen were not included in her pledges to the United States.

San Francisco—To get back home in time to vote, Superior Judge Thomas of Orange county, California, worked his way from Honolulu as an assistant purser, and "had a bully time."

TRAIN GUARD BUTCHERED BY VILLA

Escort of Mexican Central Railway Slain in Cold Blood While 400 Passengers Are Robbed of Their Valuables

El Paso, Nov. 2.—Twenty-eight de facto soldiers, forming the escort of a train on the Mexican Central railway line were butchered in cold blood, 400 passengers were lined up and robbed and a German subject beaten senseless by two hundred Villista bandits at Laguna last Monday, when the railroad line was cut by the Villistas.

Official announcement of this disaster was made here today by Consul Soriano Bravo.

The town of Laguna is about 150 miles straight south of the American border. An official bulletin, giving meager details of the butchery, reached the border when the wires were re-opened today.

Bandit chiefs Murga and Quesado, allied with Villa and noted for their cruelty, were in command of the Villista detachment.

The train, which left Juarez Monday, was heavily loaded with passengers. All were ordered from the cars, lined up and robbed of their valuables and in some cases of their clothing and shoes.

Dr. Haefner, a German physician of Chihuahua City, was returning from El Paso to his home. One bandit struck him over the head with a rifle butt, rendering him unconscious, according to advices received at the Carranza consulate. Few other passengers were harmed, it is believed, unless they resisted.

The armed escort of 28 men from the Juarez garrison was taken out in squads, stood beside the cars and shot down before the eyes of the terrified passengers. Their arms and ammunition were taken by the bandits. The passengers were then held under guard, while another party looted the express car and carried away everything of value.

As soon as information of the slaughter reached Chihuahua City, a military train with 400 de facto soldiers aboard, was hurried north to Sues in an attempt to strike the raiders.

The consulate's announcement tacitly admitted that the railway line still is severed at several points and Chihuahua City still isolated.

The official bulletin continues: "The main column of General Maycotte reached Ortiz, about eighty miles south of Chihuahua City, yesterday, on the way to Santa Rosalia. San Buena Ventura and Namiquipa re-occupied by government troops. Three bandits executed at Namiquipa."

The location of the raid upon the train near Laguna is the farthest point that Villistas in any force have penetrated since Villa was driven south by General Pershing's forces last spring and the nearest point to the American expedition the bandits have approached since Villa resumed his activities in Chihuahua state.

Laguna is only about 70 miles southeast from El Valle, where the outposts of Pershing's expedition are situated.

Since Villa's advance toward Chihuahua City, it is said another force of American troops has been moved nearer the Mexican railway.

Yonkers, N. Y.—Mose Lester, who married the three Hunter girls, is dead at 75. He married Sophie in 1865. She died and he married Margaret. She died and he married Harriet.

HE KEPT US OUT OF WAR

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